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FM AMEMBASSY JAKARTA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6123
INFO RUEHZS/ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN NATIONS
RUEHBY/AMEMBASSY CANBERRA 1135
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI 1340
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO 0763
RUEHWL/AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON 1729
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC
RHHJJPI/USPACOM HONOLULU HI
RHMCSUU/FBI WASHINGTON DC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 JAKARTA 002476

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DEPT FOR EAP, EAP/MTS, S/CT, DS/ICI/RFJ, DS/IP/EAP, DRL,
EAP/MLS, DS/DSS/ITA, DS/CC, DS/IP/SC
INR FOR CHARLIE ZENZIE, HEIDI PANETTA
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MULLANEY, ST.HILAIRE
FBI FOR ITOSI/SSA SOLOMON

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PTER](#) [ASEC](#) [PINS](#) [ID](#)

SUBJECT: POLICE SHOW RESTRAINT IN HANDLING CASCADE OF
RECENT DEMONSTRATIONS

REF: A. JAKARTA 02423

[1](#)B. JAKARTA 02349

[1](#)C. JAKARTA 02202

Classified By: Pol/C Joseph Legend Novak, reasons 1.4 (b)(d).

[1](#)1. (C) SUMMARY: The Indonesian police have repeatedly shown restraint in dealing with large and sometimes volatile crowds in recent months. This trend suggests that the police--including the Mobile Brigade--are developing a level of professionalism that is increasingly in line with international standards. It also confirms the value of the professional training provided by the USG and other countries. END SUMMARY.

[1](#)2. (SBU) SHOWING RESTRAINT: The recent performance of the Indonesian National Police (INP) and its Mobile Brigade unit in the face of large and sometimes violent demonstrations and protests occurring at diverse locations throughout Indonesia offers solid evidence that the GOI is succeeding in managing large crowds in a more professional manner. The police are, for example, increasingly employing use-of-force rules in line with international standards and avoiding human-rights violations, even when the police sustain casualties. The following examples from the past several months attest to this positive trend:

-- September 2, 2007: Tumult in Southeast Aceh due to an election result (ref A): Roughly 300 protesters threw rocks at the police. Twelve people were arrested and six police officers were injured. The police used tear gas and water cannons to disperse the crowd in a successful, non-lethal manner.

- August 21-22: Ternate, North Maluku: Approximately 300 people protested at a swearing-in ceremony of a local official in support of an opposing candidate who had been disqualified from running. The crowd threw rocks at police, injuring six officers. The police used tear gas and water cannons to disperse the crowd. Nine people were slightly

injured (ref B).

- August 12: A conference in Jakarta sponsored by a Muslim extremist group in support of a Caliphate: Over 70,000 people attended the open-air event at a local stadium. There were hundreds of Mobile Brigade officers on hand in case of violence. The conference occurred without reports of arrests or injuries (ref C).

- July 17: Nearly 14,000 angry factory workers demonstrated outside the Jakarta Stock Exchange building to protest planned lay-offs by factories leased by manufacturer Nike. Hundreds of police were mobilized. There were no reports of serious injury or arrests.

- May 1: Jakarta: Tens of thousands of workers demonstrated throughout Indonesia to demand better wages and job protection. More than 30,000 police were mobilized in Jakarta to control the situation. There were no reports of serious violence or arrests.

13. (U) Moreover, each day in Jakarta, the INP issues 5-10 permits to organizations requesting an opportunity to demonstrate. The numbers of demonstrators usually range from 25-500. The overwhelming majority of these demonstrations occur without incident.

14. (SBU) USG ASSISTANCE WORKING: In late 2000, DOJ ICITAP (with State/INL funding) began Civil Disorder Management (CDM) training with the INP, excluding the Mobile Brigade. We are currently unable to provide INL-funded training to the Mobile Brigade due to existing policy restrictions. (Note: For smaller demonstrations, the regular police stand by. For larger demonstrations, the Mobile Brigade, also known as

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BRIMOB, is put on alert in case of violence. Because of past human rights abuses, the Mobile Brigade has had a negative reputation. End Note.) To date, there have been no major injuries to Indonesian civilians by those police trained by the USG. The recent handling of demonstrations as reviewed above suggests that the INP, including the Mobile Brigade, are demonstrating increasing professionalism and tact, while working under difficult circumstances. While abuses were common in such situations in the past, such incidents are now increasingly rare. The police are now using non-lethal force as a means to control crowds. This positive performance validates the professional training provided by USG's ICITAP program and by other foreign donors.

15. (C) MORE PROGRESS NEEDED: The available evidence appears to confirm that the Indonesian police are slowly transforming themselves from a relatively undisciplined force to a more mature one appropriate to Indonesia's new democratic era. That said, the potential for abuse remains and further progress is needed to enhance professionalism. USG programs are serving a vital function in assisting this ongoing transformational process. Embassy Jakarta is reviewing what steps we should be taking to make more progress in this significant transformational diplomacy program.

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